

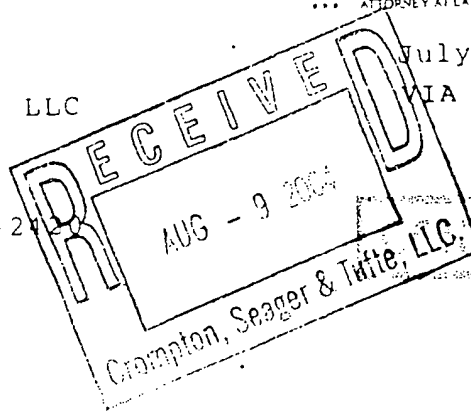


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July 30, 2004
VIA FACSIMILE

Dear Mr. Crompton:

According to your instruction in your facsimile letter of July 15, 2004, we reviewed JP 7-51067 (Y). JP 7-51067 (Y) was filed on March 28, 1990 in the name of Katoh Hatsujo Kabushiki Kaisha (Japanese Corporation) and laid open to public inspection on December 13, 1991.

The '067 publication is directed to a guidewire having a rather solid proximal portion and a flexible distal portion. The description can be divided into two portions, namely prior art portion (Figs. 4 and 5) and the invention portion (Figs. 1-3).

Fig. 4 shows a conventional guidewire that has a solid body 41 and a distally tapered end portion 41a. A densely wound coil 42 has a proximal end welded to the end portion 41a. The coil 42 has a melted head 43 to which a tip of the end portion 41a is bonded so as to prevent the coil 42 from excessive expansion.

Fig. 5 illustrates another type of conventional guidewire that has a solid body 51 and a distally tapered end portion 51a. A coil 52 has a proximal end welded to the end portion 51a and a melted head 53. A wire 54 connects the head 53 with the end portion 51a for preventing excessive expansion of the coil 52.

Figs. 1 through 3 show the guidewires 11, 21, 31 with

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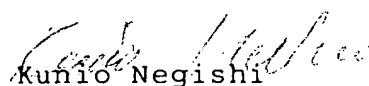
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hollow shaft 12 each having slits 14, 24 or holes 34 for making the distal portion flexible.

JP 7-28562 (U) was filed on December 24, 1993 in the name of Terumo Kabushiki Kaisha and pulished on May 30, 1995. The '262 publication has an abstract stating as follows. A guidewire 11 has a core 12 with its distal portion 221 including a plurality of X-ray imaging members 16 spaced one from another by a predetermined distance. The core 12 has a swelled portion 30 at its tip and is covered by a synthetic resin film 18. The above guidewire 11 is for improved visibility and is able to easily and safely pass a stenosis.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. In the meantime, we are enclosing our bill for our service.

Sincerely,


Kunio Negishi

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